

Message Text

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SUBJECT: WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL INDICATORS, MAY 20-23

1. SUMMARY. WP ON SOCIAL INDICATORS MET MAY 20-23 TO
CONSIDER PROGRESS TO DATE AND FUTURE WORK. WP EXPRESSED
SOME CONCERN WITH SECRETARIAT'S CONTINUING EFFORTS TO
RESTRUCTURE BASIC LIST OF SOCIAL CONCERN (PHASE I),
AND PROPOSED THAT ANY RESTRUCTURING BE DEFERRED UNTIL
PHASE II OF PROGRAM (INDICATOR SPECIFICATION) IS
COMPLETED. WP ALSO ADVISED SECRETARIAT TO PREPARE
SUMMARY RECORD BY AUGUST, 1975 FOR WP CONSIDERATION AT
ITS NEXT MEETING, WHICH IS TENTATIVELY SET FOR DECEMBER
15-19, 1975. DENIS JOHNSTON' OMB, LED US DEL.
END SUMMARY.

2. MR. GASS, DIRECTOR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS, MANPOWER AND
EDUCATION SECRETARIAT, OUTLINED THE MAIN TASK BEFORE THE
WP: TO AGREE ON A SET OF WORKABLE SOCIAL INDICATORS OR
PROXY MEASURES FOR USE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED
IN PHASE I (AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED). GASS NOTED
WHEN THIS TASK IS COMPLETED IT WILL THEN BE POSSIBLE TO
UNDERTAKE, ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS, THE ASSEMBLY OF
SELECTED BODIES OF DATA FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES DURING
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1976. THE EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THIS EXERCISE WILL

PROVIDE ESSENTIAL "FEED-BACK" INFORMATION ON THE BASIS OF WHICH FURTHER REVISIONS OF THE BASIC FRAMEWORK OF CONCERNS (PHASE I) AND IMPROVED INDICATOR SPECIFICATIONS (PHASE II) CAN BE MADE, AS NEEDED.

3. AGENDA.

THE WP RECEIVED AND COMMENTED UPON A NUMBER OF PAPERS RELATING TO THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE LIST OF BASIC CONCERNS AND TO THE SPECIFICATION OF INDICATORS RELATING TO THESE CONCERNS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS: SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION; PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT; PERSONAL SAFETY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE; EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY; ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY; PROTECTION AGAINST ECONOMIC HAZARDS; AND THE QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE. WP ALSO REVIEWED A BACKGROUND PAPER PREPARED BY US DEL ON DATA DISAGGREGATION FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS, AND A SUMMARY OF MEMBER COUNTRY RESPONSES TO AN OECD QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING THEIR USE OF "SUBJECTIVE" OR PERCEPTUAL SURVEY DATA FOR ANALYTIC OR POLICY PURPOSES.

4. CONCLUSIONS.

A. THE SECRETARIAT EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH A WRITTEN PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE EFFECT THAT ANY FURTHER RESTRUCTURING OF THE BASIC LIST OF SOCIAL CONCERNS (PHASE I) SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL WP HAS COMPLETED PHASE II OF ITS ACTIVITIES (INDICATOR SPECIFICATION), AND HAS BEEN ABLE TO COLLECT

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SOME ACTUAL DATA ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS (PHASE III).
THIS POSITION WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE US AND
MOST OTHER DELEGATIONS.

B. THE SECRETARIAT WILL DRAFT A SUMMARY REPORT FOR
REVIEW IN AUGUST, 1975, WITH A SECOND DRAFT TO BE
PRESENTED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WP IN DECEMBER,
1975. THIS SUMMARY REPORT SHALL PRESENT THE REVISED
FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS, A GENERAL DISCUSSION
OF THE RELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL INDICATORS AND SOCIAL
REPORTING AND POLICY ANALYSIS, AND SOME GUIDELINES FOR
INDICATOR DEFINITION AND SPECIFICATION, INCLUDING
ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES DRAWN FROM PAPERS PREVIOUSLY SUB-
MITTED AND COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THIS MEETING.

C. THE SECRETARIAT WILL ALSO PROCEED WITH THE PREPARA-
TION OF A NUMBER OF PROGRAM REPORTS, GEARED TOWARD
SPECIALISTS AND FOCUSING ON PARTICULAR AREAS OF CON-
CERN, AND A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL REPORTS ON SUCH SUBJECTS
AS HEALTH, WORK SATISFACTION, DATA SOURCES ON CRIMINAL
VICTIMIZATION, DATA DISAGGREGATION FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS,
SOCIAL MOBILITY, ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY, AND THE CONCEPT
OF EQUALITY. THESE REPORTS WILL BE BASED ON BACKGROUND
PAPERS AND WORKING DOCUMENTS WHICH ARE ALREADY
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AVAILABLE; THEREFORE THEY WILL NOT REQUIRE EXTENSIVE
STAFF RESOURCES FOR EDITING AND PUBLICATION.
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